

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (previously amended) A method of forming an easy-open corner portion of a bag, the corner portion being removable to define a pourer through which contents of the bag are dispensed, the bag having first and second walls with joined opposing side edges, opposing end edges, and a seal line proximate one of the end edges for sealing closed an end of the bag, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) forming a starter nick in a skirt of the bag between the end edge and the proximate seal line;

(b) forming a series of closely spaced perforations in the first and second walls of the bag, the perforations extending along a predefined tear line from the end edge of the bag proximate the starter nick to one side edge of the bag; and

(c) when forming the starter nick and perforations, bypassing the seal line of the bag to avoid damaging the seal line during formation of the easy-open corner portion, such that the seal line protects the bag against inadvertent bursting and spillage of contents, and the tear line intersecting the seal line such that upon removal of the corner portion of the bag along the tear line, the seal line is then severed to allow dispensing of contents through the resulting pourer.

Claims 2-4 (cancelled).

5. (new) A method according to claim 1, and comprising spacing the starter nick from the first of the perforations a distance greater than a distance between the first perforation and a second, adjacent perforation.

6. (new) A method according to claim 1, and comprising spacing the starter nick from the first of the perforations a distance of a least 50 percent greater than a distance between the first perforation and a second, adjacent perforation.

7. (new) A method according to claim 1, and comprising spacing the starter nick from the first of the perforations a distance greater than 0.38 inches.

8. (new) A method of forming an easy-open corner portion of a bag, the corner portion being removable to define a pourer through which contents of the bag are dispensed, the bag having first and second walls with joined opposing side edges, opposing end edges, and a seal line proximate one of the end edges for sealing closed an end of the bag, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) forming a starter nick in a skirt of the bag between the end edge and the proximate seal line;

(b) simultaneous with step (a), forming a series of closely spaced perforations in the first and second walls of the bag, the perforations extending along a predefined tear line from the end edge of the bag proximate the starter nick to one side edge of the bag; and

(c) when forming the starter nick and perforations, bypassing the seal line of the bag to avoid damaging the seal line during formation of the easy-open corner portion, such

that the seal line protects the bag against inadvertent bursting and spillage of contents, and the tear line intersecting the seal line such that upon removal of the corner portion of the bag along the tear line, the seal line is then severed to allow dispensing of contents through the resulting pourer.

9. (new) A method according to claim 8, and comprising spacing the starter nick from the first of the perforations a distance greater than a distance between the first perforation and a second, adjacent perforation.

10. (new) A method according to claim 8, and comprising spacing the starter nick from the first of the perforations a distance of at least 50 percent greater than a distance between the first perforation and a second, adjacent perforation.

11. (new) A method according to claim 8, and comprising spacing the starter nick from the first of the perforations a distance greater than 0.38 inches.